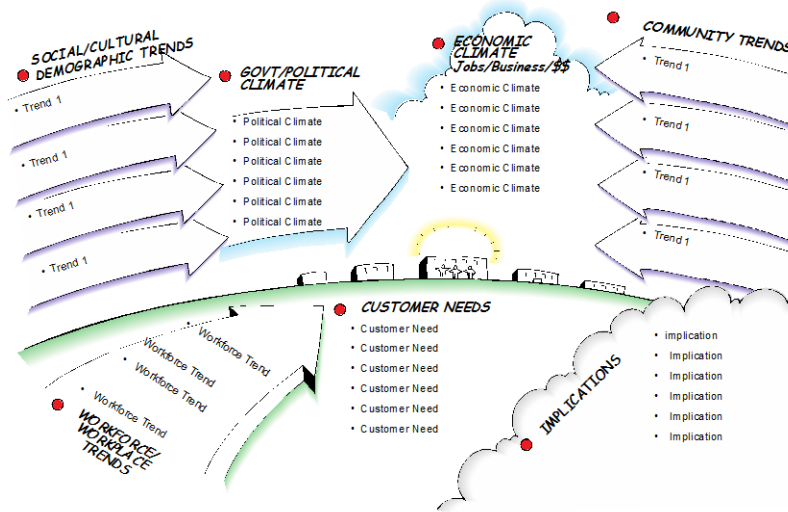# APPENDIX

HOPEWELL MANAGEMENT TEAM STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION REPORT
April 2-3, 2014
Gravelly Run Training Center

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN
Managers completed an environmental scan to assess trends, factors, and needs affecting the City of Hopewell that should be considered in strategic planning.

City of Hopewell Staff Environmental Scan

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Social/Cultural/Demographic Trends
What are the social, cultural, and demographic trends that have or may have the most significant strategic impact on the City of Hopewell?

- Single parent households
- 58% white, 38% black
- Increasing number of Hispanics
- Generational subsistence recipients; sense of entitlement
- More violent society (compared to the past)
- People who work in Hopewell often move out as finances improve
- Beacon Theater and the river are attracting new visitors
- Market Hopewell to our own people
- Recognizing homelessness (i.e. count)

Government/Political Climate
What governmental and political factors have or may have the most significant strategic impact on the City of Hopewell?
- Council participation in the strategic planning process is positive
- Upcoming election may bring as many as 4 new members
- Infighting on Council does not help image of City
- Lack of a comprehensive plan; we need a vision
- Councilors seeking individual credit versus Council's effort/plan as a body
- Fort Lee – Federal process
- Medicaid expansion – what will be to impact to local Social Services Department
- Affordable Health Care Act – impact on local government health care cost, impact to small private practices
- Stormwater management – new laws requiring stormwater fees create $$ impact to citizens as City implements
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) – impact on local government and small businesses (full time/part time)
- Lack of understanding of Council/Manager form of government
- Unfunded mandates on the State and Federal level
- Grants are given and then removed (i.e. bus service, police, schools)
- New city manager

Economic Climate (Jobs/Business/$$)
What economic trends and factors related to jobs, business, income, and funding should be considered in our strategic plan for the City?
- Need to maintain and sustain the meals tax and BPOL taxes
- Stagnation in the housing market
- Attract lower income households because of the housing stock (older, smaller, cheaper)
- Attract stores that cater to low income clientele (i.e. dollar stores, check cashing)
- Lower income households tend to disproportionately utilize social services, polices services, hospital emergency
- Need to attract middle/high income families to City
- Good opportunities for growth - Downtown, Beacon, Route 36 redevelopment
- Slow growth in new revenues
- Must have a broader housing discussion
- Need an educated citizenry; must attract educated people to City (Bachelor's degree for only 10.6% of population)
- We are a retirement community and this could be used in a positive way
- Military/Fort Lee impact/BRAC
  - City image causing personnel to steer away from home purchase; instead are renting
  - Negative perception of schools and crime
  - Do spend in stores along Route 36
  - Rumors of base commissary closing
- The "Big 3" manufacturing companies are expanding

- Opening of Vireol
- The opening of the Beacon Theater and the Marina adds to the positive image of the City and to the quality of life here
- We have water resources for new industries to local here and have access to rail and interstate highways
- Grant resources are dwindling (may need to hire a grant writer)
- Need to provide recreation/entertainment
- Need commercial and service oriented businesses
- Having public transit is positive
- Access points to river and marina are assets that few communities have

Community Trends
What significant trends/factors/needs are we seeing in the community that influence our strategic planning effort?
- Community does not tend to embrace change
- Growing renting population
- Growing need for government assistance
- Poverty; 80% of kids are on free lunch
- Most of the young people with ambition tend to move out
- Aging population
- Perception of Hopewell and what other people think
- Sense of community in "areas" of Hopewell
- Think of ourselves more as a town versus a city; we have capacity issues on all levels

Customer Trends
What are the significant strategic customer trends/factors/needs?
- One stop shopping via technology (website) – must speed up the process
- Demands are higher; technology drives progress
  - Instant gratification
  - Reality vs. perception – not patient regarding process in local government
- Be transparent and accessible
- Expect City to improve housing and quality of life
- Be more progressive; we are trying to address issues, but it will not happen overnight
- Not willing to pay for services (political, generational)
- Provide a more diverse tax base
- Customer service – this is very positive and has been promoted from the top down
- Find out "what brought you to Hopewell" and capitalize on this; need to market more on opportunities (asked new employees to answer this question)
  - Can be a "bigger fish in a small pond" and have more influence
  - Planning opportunities
  - Negotiating a challenging environment can be a good thing

Workforce/Workplace Trends
What significant trends are influencing our workforce and workplace that should be considered in strategic planning?

- Health care – affordability, access, uncertainty
- Compensation/salaries
- Technology – more/less; can be an accelerator when used in the right way
- Training/employee development can enhance performance; more diverse opportunities
- Succession planning/retirement/hiring the right people
- Gear up for millenials in the workplace and the changing workplace mindset
  - Must understand employee needs (not always $$)
  - Provide a supportive workplace
- Quality of life – generational changes make expectations higher; more individuals now want instant gratification
- Schools – the City's stereotype drives people away even though we have good teachers and programs; educational partnerships are needed
- Want people living and working in the community; lack of community
- Career development – must initiate CDP and gain support
- Historical aspect is positive
- Cost of living in Hopewell is positive; can get more house for the $$ and we are in close proximity to many attractions/opportunities
- Industry base is positive
- Need to increase economic base – "nowhere to eat/play"
- Recruitment – we have great benefits and need to foster knowledge of this so that Hopewell is perceived as THE place to work
- Have flexible schedules
- State "meddling" in business (i.e. retirement)
- Small town environment and family feel are assets
- Broad professional perspective from staff working here; this is positive on which to build
- Staff are juggling too many balls; we have had lean staffing for a long time
- Role of staff as ambassadors is important; we must speak positively of Hopewell

Implications of the Environmental Scan
Moving forward, what are the implications of the environmental scan and how that might influence our work on the strategic plan?

- We have to concentrate on the assets that are attracting employees to live and work here. What attracted our new City employees to work in Hopewell included:
  - Professional opportunities –being a "big fish in a little pond"
  - The new Social Services building is a building of which we should be proud (though it also takes up prime real estate.) When you work in an environment that gives you the tools with which to work, you do good work.
  - Have more resources with which to work

- Good interview process - the people that interviewed me responded well to me, were nice to me, got to know me, and "made the process count"
- Elimination of the residency requirement
- Opportunity to make a difference; I like challenges

- We must be progressive. The community doesn't embrace change, so we have to move it along. We have to be respectful of the response, while directing it in a positive way.
  - Be the change agents in our respective departments
  - Take charge
  - Have courage and take calculated risks
  - Be aggressive and strike while the iron is hot; don't falter with "analysis paralysis"
  - Turn negatives into positives
  - Accept criticism as caring because criticism means that individuals care about the issue; we've had a lot of indifference so must recognize that criticism is an opportunity to "sell" a new perspective on the issue and create advocates; take the time to sit down with "problem people" and try to turn them around

- If we build it, they will come, but we have to find a way to maintain it at a high quality.
  - The cost of the newly funded projects – must have new sources of revenue to fund. If we don't have new sources of revenue, then we have to have new taxes; so we must evaluate whether the value of the product is worth the cost
  - Have to help the Council think further down the road and fund the plan over the long term
  - May need to look at a CIP that is meaningful
  - Recognize that we may think that "it won't happen" because of the past
  - Ongoing maintenance and operation must be part of the upfront planning
  - Have to build maintenance planning into strategic planning
  - Have to figure out a way to connect critical pieces including funding and a timeline

- We must continue to be a game changer as it relates to innovation, creativity, implementation, and the sustainability of the Strategic Plan.

- Communication between the people sitting at this table is critical. We have to talk to each other, figure out a way to collaborate and to take the pieces and make it a whole.

- We have to be strategic and purposeful in providing programs that reduce the negative indicators. We must determine how to promote the optimal conditions for success (i.e. families, housing, schools, and crime)
  - Create partnerships among education, social services, housing, planning, business.
  - Determine how we can better target our efforts to change outcomes.